

Rental Housing Inspection Checklist

3/2013

RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Rental Housing inspectors look at many items. So that you may have a better idea and understanding of what to keep an eye on in regards to maintenance, we have listed a few of the most common items of concern. Please note: this list is not all inclusive.

Outside

- Are street numbers visible from the street?
- Is the dwelling and/or other structures in good condition?
- Does the roof leak and/or is it in good repair?
- Are the steps (uniform height and depth), decks and landings in good condition?
- Do balconies, decks and landings, 30 inches or more above the ground, have guardrails?
- Do stairs with more than 4 risers have handrails?
- Is the foundation in good repair?
- Is the yard free of rubbish, noxious and tall grass?
- Are sidewalks in a safe and sound condition (trip hazards)?

Inside the dwelling(s)

Smoke detectors, Fire Alarms, Fire Extinguishers, Egress and Combustibles

- Are functioning smoke detectors located in sleeping rooms, outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedroom(s) and on each floor level?
 - New smoke alarms shall be dual sensor type.
- In multi-family dwellings, are detectors located every 30 feet in corridors and at the top of stairways?
- Is there a fully charged and properly mounted fire extinguisher in each unit not served by a common corridor, or if a corridor is there a 2A 10 BC extinguisher within 75 feet of each dwelling unit?
- Are combustibles stored at least 3 feet from ignition sources?
- **Windows**
- Are there broken or cracked windows or panes?
- Are windows weather tight and in good working order (able to remain open without support)?
- Do windows have functioning locks?
- Do habitable rooms have an openable window?
- Are all openable windows provided with screens in good condition?
- Does each sleeping room have an *egress window?

***Egress Window(s)** maintain existing egress windows in existing sleeping rooms, replacement(s) of existing egress windows must maintain the size and type of existing egress window or must meet the current criteria for egress windows shown per note below.

Note: current requirements for egress windows: must have a minimum openable area of 5.7 square feet with a minimum openable width of 20 inches and a minimum openable height of 24 inches. The bottom of the window must be no more than 44 inches above the floor or landing. Where a landing is provided the landing shall be not less than 36 inches wide, not less than 18 inches out from the exterior wall, and not more than 24 inches in height. The landing shall be permanently affixed to the floor below and the wall under the openable area of the window it serves.

Sleeping Rooms

- Is each sleeping room at least 70 square feet? If more than two persons occupy a room used for sleeping purposes, the required floor area is increased at a rate 50 square feet for each occupant in excess of two.

Doors

- Do exterior doors have functioning locks?
- Are screen and storm doors operable and weather tight?
- If an attached garage, does the door between the house and garage self-close and latch?

- In multi-unit buildings with a common hallway/stair/corridor if the hallway/stair/corridor doors have closers or self-closing hinges do they work and do the doors latch?

Wall, Ceilings & Floors

- Are walls and ceilings properly sealed, free of peeling paint and able to be maintained in a sanitary condition?
- Are floors structurally sound and are floors coverings in good condition (trip hazards)?
- Do habitable rooms have a ceiling height of at least 7 feet?

Electrical System

- Does each habitable room have at least one switched light fixture and 2 duplex receptacles or a switched duplex outlet plus another duplex outlet?
- Are outlets located apart so that extension cords are not needed?
- Are cover plates for switches, outlets and junction boxes in place?
- Are there extension cords running through doorways or under floor coverings? This is not allowed.
- Are all outlets within 6 feet of water sources provided with ground fault protection (GFCI's)?
- Is service adequately sized for the loads with appropriate breakers/fuses and wire sizes?
- Are electrical panel circuits labeled?
- Does the electrical panel have unprotected openings where a breaker or fuse would otherwise be installed?
 - Any new or replaced receptacle(s) including GFCI's must be tamper-proof.

Mechanical System

- Does each room including bathrooms have adequate heat? Capable of maintaining 68°.
- Does the heating system operate properly?
- Does the water heater have a temperature relief valve with extension pipe that extends within 6 inches of the floor?
- Are flue pipes properly venting the combustion gases to the outside?
- Are there fuel burning devices in bathrooms or sleeping rooms? This is not allowed.
- Is the clothes dryer properly vented to the outside?
 - If the connector between the dryer and the vent to the outside is the white vinyl/plastic 'slinky' replace it with a metallic/foil type or metal duct (do use not screws to secure).

Plumbing System

- Does each dwelling unit contain a tub or shower, lavatory, water closet and kitchen sink in working order and free of leaks?
- Do any of the supply or drain lines leak?
- Do the fixtures have adequate water pressure when operating?

Basement

- Are steps, handrails and guardrails in a safe condition?
 - If there is an open side to the stair it must have a guardrail.
- Sleeping rooms must meet the requirements for finished walls and ceilings, ventilation, ceiling height, heating and egress. Smoke detectors are required.
- Is there a switched ceiling or wall-type light fixture?

Bathrooms

- Is there a ground fault circuit interrupted outlet (GFCI) near the sink?
- Are all outlets within 6 feet of water sources provided with ground fault protection (GFCI's)?
- Are plumbing fixtures working adequately with adequate pressure etc?
- Is the floor easily kept in a clean and dry condition?
- Is there an openable window and/or adequate mechanical ventilation?

Permits – Note: Permits and inspections are required for remodeling work including new wiring. Please call (515) 963-3550 if you are anticipating doing any work and have questions concerning this process.

Recycling - All multifamily dwellings which are not presently part of existing residential recycling collection programs shall be required to provide the facilities for the source separation of all designated recyclable materials generated on the premises and shall arrange for the collection of said materials to be transported to a recycling facility.

Exit Signage and Emergency Lighting, Carbon Monoxide Alarms and Manual Fire Alarm Systems for multi-family residential buildings, not already in compliance, will be required in the future. Please see "Multi-family Residential Life-Safety Systems" document for that information.